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UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE IN OPERATION DESERT STORM



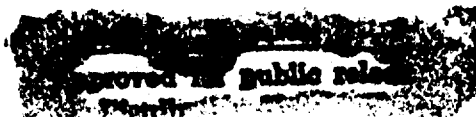
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**The Case of the Unit that was not Called:
The 377th Theater Army Area Command**

Adding Value to the Total Force and to the Nation

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FOREWORD

This is one in a series of monographs describing and assessing the role of the United States Army Reserve in winning the war in the Persian Gulf. Countless reports have been written and numerous books published about the coalition victory. None have appeared, however, that focus on the valuable contributions of Army Reserve soldiers and civilians to the favorable outcome of the conflict. This monograph and others in the series fill that void.

This report, unlike most others in this series, is **not** considered a Total Army success story. Fifty percent of the units aligned with the 377th Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM) mobilized and deployed to Southwest Asia, but because of the delay in calling the Reserves to active duty and the imposition of restrictive strength ceilings, leaders decided not to use this Army Reserve command as a senior Army logistics and combat service support headquarters during the war. Had the decision to call up the Reserves occurred earlier, and had it been for more than the 90-day period originally announced, the 377th TAACOM could have made significant contributions. Although timing prevented their employment as a senior command, the deployed soldiers of the 377th TAACOM worked side by side with Active Component counterparts to perform one of the most impressive combat service support and logistics operations in military history.

Other monographs will describe the roles of a variety of Army Reserve units and individual soldiers. They will include military police, civil affairs specialists, engineers, trainers, medical personnel, transporters, communicators and strategic intelligence units. These monographs, and the results of additional research on Army Reserve contributions to operations in the Persian Gulf, will be bound eventually in a single volume.

Your comments on this and future issuances are most welcome.

FOR THE CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE:

RONALD E. SMITH
Colonel, General Staff
Chief, Program Analysis and
Evaluation Division

UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE
in
OPERATION DESERT STORM

The Case of the Unit That Was Not Called:

The 377th Theater Army Area Command

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John R. Brinkerhoff, Consultant to the ANDRULIS Research Corporation, has been the principal author of this report. Ted Silva and John Seitz were editors and contributing authors.

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Questions concerning this report may be addressed to:

Headquarters
Department of the Army
ATTN: DAAR-PAE
Room 1D416, The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-2400

Phone: (703) 695-2288
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in
OPERATION DESERT STORM**

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The 377th Theater Army Area Command**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| The Expectation | 1 |
| The Unit | 2 |
| The Preparation | 3 |
| The Call Up | 5 |
| The 377th Decision | 6 |
| The CENTCOM Solution | 6 |
| The Mystery | 8 |
| The Capability of the 377th | 9 |
| Reserve General Officer Headquarters | 9 |
| The Need for the 377th TAACOM | 11 |
| The Timing of the Call Up | 12 |
| The Basis for the Decision | 13 |

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

| | Page |
|--|------|
| The Consequences | 14 |
| Impact on the 377th | 14 |
| Impact on Logistical Support in the Gulf | 15 |
| Impact on the Future Total Army | 15 |
| A Final Word | 17 |
| End Notes | 19 |

UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE
in
OPERATION DESERT STORM

The Case of the Unit That Was Not Called:
The 377th Theater Army Area Command

"Is there any point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

"To the curious incident of the dog in the nighttime."

"The dog did nothing in the nighttime."

"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes.¹

Sherlock Holmes was able to solve one of his cases because of the curious incident of the dog that did not bark. The point of the story was that the dog should have barked, but did not. In finding out why the dog did not do what was expected, Sherlock Holmes found the truth.

In the call up of the Reserve Components for Operation DESERT STORM, there was also a curious incident--The Case of the Unit That Was not Called. The unit that was not called is the 377th Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM), United States Army Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana. The point of this story is that the unit was expected to be called, but was not. In finding out why the 377th TAACOM was not treated in the expected manner, it is possible to gain some insights into the way that the Army applied the Total Army Concept for Operation DESERT STORM.²

The Expectation

The expectation was that the 377th TAACOM would be called to active duty to serve as the combat service support headquarters for the Third US Army in a conflict in the Middle East. This was the assigned role of the unit, but it did not happen.

The Unit

A Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM) is a headquarters designed to command a large number of combat service support headquarters and units for a theater of operations.³ It is commanded by a major general and is the highest level combat service support headquarters in the theater working directly for the theater commander or the Army component commander.

The 377th TAACOM is an Army Reserve unit which had been designated as the theater combat service support headquarters for operations in the Persian Gulf and trained for eight years for that mission. The 377th TAACOM's peacetime mission was "focused on coordination of its CAPSTONE units and with the Third United States Army (TUSA)..."⁴ The wartime mission of the unit was "in support of the Third United States Army (TUSA) and Central Command, or CENTCOM, which is focused in general on Southwest Asia and in particular on the Persian Gulf Region."⁵

The 377th TAACOM is a headquarters, manned and equipped to supervise the operations of other functional headquarters. As headquarters go it is large, with an authorized strength of 154 officers and 262 enlisted personnel. The unit is organized into a command section, personal staff officers, six major functional staff sections, and a headquarters company. The command section includes the Commander and Deputy Commander, Command Sergeant Major, and their aides and support personnel. The personal staff sections include the Chaplain, Inspector General, Public Affairs Officer, and Staff Judge Advocate. The Headquarters Commandant is responsible for the administration of the headquarters itself. Six major functional staff sections perform the work of the headquarters in managing the combat service support operations of the subordinate units. The six functional sections are supervised by the Chief of Staff, and each of these sections is headed by an assistant chief of staff. The six functional staff sections are as follows: personnel; security; plans and operations; materiel services (including supply and maintenance); civil/military operations; and comptroller. The 377th TAACOM was in good condition and considered deployable in August 1990. That meant that it was up to strength and well trained for its mission.

The Commander of the 377th TAACOM is Major General Alvin W. Jones, US Army Reserve. General Jones assumed command of the 377th in February 1987 and is scheduled to leave his command and retire at the end of May 1991. Before taking command of the 377th, he was the Commander of the 420th Engineer Brigade, Texas, for 4 years. General Jones was born in Texas, educated in Texas, and lived there most of his life. He graduated from North Texas State University, Denton, in 1952 with a BS in Education and earned a Masters degree in education at Texas A&M University. As a civilian he was an educator for 35 years. Until his retirement in 1989, he was a division head with the Texas Engineering Extension Service at Texas A&M University. Like most Reservists, General Jones has a military career as well as a civilian career. He graduated from Engineer Officer Candidate School and was commissioned

on 2 June 1953. He served on active duty for 18 months in Engineer units in CONUS, Korea, and Guam. He then left active duty and spent 35 years as a drilling Reservist in the United States Army Reserve. He worked his way up from Platoon Leader to Company Commander, brigade staff officer, Battalion Commander, Assistant Corps Engineer, Engineer Group Commander, and finally command of two general officer commands. He was appointed by the Secretary of the Army to be a member of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee from 1987 to 1990. General Jones is typical of many Reservists in his dedication to the Army as he commuted from his home in College Station, Texas, to New Orleans, Louisiana, to command the 377th TAACOM. Major General Jones has been an outstanding commander for the 377th. He was a highly effective leader whose subordinates followed not only willingly but enthusiastically.

The Preparation

When the decision was made to deploy US forces to the Persian Gulf in response to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the Third US Army was assigned as the Army Component Command for the US Central Command, which controlled the operation. As ARCENT, the Third U.S. Army commanded almost all of the Army units in the theater and had responsibility for the combat service support of Army and some Air Force units. It was formed in 1982 and maintained in the force structure for this purpose with its home station at Fort McPherson, Georgia. Third U.S. Army Headquarters planned and prepared to command the Army forces in a joint task force or a unified command engaged in military operations in the Middle East.

The 377th TAACOM was the only command of its type associated with the Third U.S. Army since that headquarters was formed in 1982.⁶ In this capacity, the 377th TAACOM helped Third U.S. Army Headquarters develop its operation plans for military contingencies in the Middle East and Southwest Asia. It participated in all major exercises from 1982 to 1990 as the Third U.S. Army combat service support command and control headquarters. The 377th TAACOM oriented its training and education programs toward the Middle East and Southwest Asia theaters. Personnel of the unit learned about their prospective areas of operation and took special courses. Their plans were designed specifically for operations in those areas. It would have seemed logical that when the moment came, the 377th TAACOM would be called to function in the role for which it had trained for eight years.

The 377th TAACOM was familiar with the combat service support units the Army planned to employ in support of Third U.S. Army in a Middle East operation. Forces Command Headquarters maintains a gigantic organization chart, called CAPSTONE, showing the intended wartime affiliation of all of the Army's deployable units. One of the responsibilities of the 377th TAACOM in its intended role as the combat service support headquarters for Third Army was to provide guidance and planning assistance for its CAPSTONE trace--the subordinate levels in the organization chart. There were almost 200 other combat service support companies

and detachments in the CAPSTONE trace of the 377th TAACOM. The 377th TAACOM was the apex of a pyramid of other combat service support headquarters from group to battalion, which constituted the intended command and control structure for the companies and detachments of various kinds that actually perform the work. The CAPSTONE trace of the 377th TAACOM included several area support groups intended to command a mixed set of combat service support units, a petroleum group, and a civil affairs group. The battalion headquarters included the following types: maintenance; supply & services; motor transport; petroleum operations; graves registration; water supply; composite services; chemical; and administrative (personnel replacement). The 377th TAACOM actually commanded in peacetime only one other Army Reserve unit--the 321st Materiel Management Center. But it had functional planning responsibility for its entire CAPSTONE trace and expected to be used in that role in wartime in a contingency operation in that part of the world.

In the deliberate planning process, the scenarios that were developed for the Middle East by CENTCOM always included the use of the 377th TAACOM and the units in the trace of the 377th. There was no other plan to provide the essential command and control of theater combat service support. The logistics staff sections of CENTCOM and Third U.S. Army Headquarters were neither manned nor intended to be used as logistics operators. This was left to the 377th TAACOM and its subordinate headquarters in the CAPSTONE trace. The planning made provision for temporary command and control arrangements needed as the first companies and detachments deployed to the theater. Initially, logistical command and control might be exercised by a Corps Support Command (COSCOM), a smaller headquarters designed to provide support to an Army Corps. As the theater matured, the COSCOM could conceivably be replaced by the 377th TAACOM as the ultimate logistical headquarters. The Army is the designated DOD executive agent for many combat service support functions (e.g., POL, water, and ammunition), and in addition to being the Army theater level logistics operator, the 377th TAACOM had also been envisioned as the logistics operator for CENTCOM itself.

It would have been possible for the Army to have activated the 377th TAACOM and allowed that headquarters to operate initially at home station using secure communications means (which the unit had) to communicate with other headquarters. During the early stages of Operation DESERT STORM, the logistical staff of CENTCOM was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of decisions and actions required. The decisions on the type and number of combat service support units needed in theater were made by the Service component commands, particularly Third U.S. Army. During the early stages, the 377th TAACOM could have been useful in organizing and managing the build up of combat service support units in the theater. Then the unit could have been deployed when the theater matured sufficiently to require the services of a TAACOM.

When the Third U.S. Army was called upon to do its intended job in the Persian Gulf the expectation was that the 377th TAACOM would be called upon to perform the function of logistics operator for the theater. Many of the combat service support headquarters and units

in the CAPSTONE trace of the 377th TAACOM were called to active duty for Operation DESERT STORM and deployed to Saudi Arabia. Although the organization of companies and detachments into battalions and groups was tailored for Operation DESERT STORM, the CAPSTONE organization was used--with the obvious exception of the 377th TAACOM at the top.

The Call Up

On 23 August 1990, the Army was authorized to call to active duty up to 25,000 Selected Reservists in what turned out to be the initial increment. The Army actually called 24,734 Reservists to active duty at this time, of which 17,504 were members of the US Army Reserve.⁷ No combat units of the Army National Guard or Army Reserve were included in this initial call up. Subsequently the Army's authorization for involuntary call up of National Guard and Army Reserve personnel was increased to 80,000 and then to 115,000, not including 20,000 IRR personnel also authorized to be called. The total number of US Army Selected Reservists called to active duty involuntarily for Operation DESERT STORM was about 65,000.⁸

The initial call up from the Army Reserve consisted of about 20% combat support units and 80% combat service support units. Three US Army Garrisons, most of the medical units, and many of the port operations units were employed in the CONUS base. The remaining units--including transportation, maintenance, supply, water, petroleum, engineer, chemical, military police, postal, and personnel replacement and administration--were deployed to the Persian Gulf.

Most of the units actually called up in the first increment were companies and detachments, but a number of battalion headquarters commanded by lieutenant colonels and group or brigade headquarters commanded by colonels, together with a few high level headquarters headed by general officers were also called to provide the necessary command and control of the smaller units.

The 377th TAACOM was alerted on 23 August 1990 for call up in support of DESERT STORM. The unit started processing and getting ready to perform its intended role. However, on 27 September 1990, the 377th TAACOM was taken off alert status and directed to return to normal status. The unit was advised that there was no indication of a recall.

What happened? The original impulse of the Army was to activate the 377th TAACOM and other high level logistical headquarters to serve in their CAPSTONE roles. However, between 22 August 1990 and 27 September 1990, something changed the Army's mind. A decision was made not to call the 377th TAACOM and other high level Reserve logistical headquarters.

The 377th Decision

The decision not to call the 377th TAACOM was not unanimous within the Army. The Army Staff and FORSCOM Headquarters favored using the 377th in its intended role. The placement of the 377th TAACOM on the original alert list shows that Army planners were trying to use the CAPSTONE organization and previously exercised command relationships as the basis for developing the lists of units to be called. The Central Command Headquarters and the ARCENT staff opposed calling up the 377th. The view of the people in the Persian Gulf was that they already had a logistical management structure, a provisional headquarters, in place and did not need another headquarters to duplicate their efforts and possibly confuse the situation.

The proponents of the 377th TAACOM, located principally in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (ODSCLOG) of the Army, responded that having a cohesive, trained, logistical headquarters already familiar with the theater of operations would be a plus for the theater particularly after the full magnitude of the buildup became apparent.⁹ The Army Staff also pointed out that the logistical buildup in the Persian Gulf was just starting and the need for logistical headquarters would grow as more troops and more equipment and supplies reached the theater. They urged the theater logisticians to look ahead and not rely solely on the initial setup. Despite the views of the Army's chief logistician, the tendency was to give greatest weight to the desires of the man on the ground--the theater commander. Accordingly, the decision was elevated to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, General Gordon Sullivan. The DCSLOG recommended that the 377th TAACOM be called up and used in the theater while pointing out the opposition of CENTCOM to this.

General Sullivan decided to support the CENTCOM position but forwarded the decision to the Office of the Secretary of the Army for final review. The Vice Chief of Staff was aware of the possible adverse political repercussions from not calling the 377th TAACOM. At this time the Army was under fire from the Congress for failing to call Army National Guard round-out brigades and generally for not giving the Total Force Policy more than lip service. General Sullivan sent the 377th decision package to the Office of the Secretary of the Army so that the Secretary or his assistants could have the option to overturn his decision against the 377th on the grounds of political prudence. When the Secretary of the Army took no action to reverse the decision of the Vice Chief of Staff, the 377th TAACOM was removed from the list of units to be called for Operation DESERT STORM.

The CENTCOM Solution

The CENTCOM solution for the logistical management structure was to create from whole cloth several new high level logistical headquarters. In effect, CENTCOM or really the ARCENT--Third U.S. Army--discarded the Army's CAPSTONE plan for the top level logistical chain of command. The ARCENT command structure included initially a provisional SUPCOM

providing theater support for the Army component of CENTCOM and two Corps Support Commands.¹⁰ The Corps Support Commands were existing Active Army headquarters moved from CONUS and Europe respectively. In addition, two provisional Area Support Commands were formed to work directly under the provisional SUPCOM. These combat service support headquarters were under the functional supervision of the Deputy Commanding General for Logistics of ARCENT, Lieutenant General William G. Pagonis.

The background and experience of the top combat service support commander in ARCENT is very important in this story. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, General Pagonis was the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (J4) of FORSCOM. He had been in this new job for only a few weeks at that time, having reported to FORSCOM in June 1990. Immediately before this assignment, General Pagonis was assigned to the Army Staff as Director of Transportation, Energy, and Troop Support in the Office of the DCSLOG at DA. Before that, General Pagonis had served in the 21st TAACOM in Europe. In this position he became familiar with the personnel of the 21st TAACOM CONUS Augmentation, an Army Reserve unit designed to provide additional trained personnel in the event of a war in Europe.

When Lieutenant General Yeosock, Commander, Third U.S. Army, traveled with Secretary of Defense Cheney to Saudi Arabia on the initial visit after the Iraqi invasion, he took then-Major General Pagonis along as a logistical advisor. General Pagonis never returned to the US. He, along with others, remained in Saudi Arabia charged with the job of building the U.S. Armed Forces presence in that theater. General Pagonis found himself in Saudi Arabia responsible for the management of combat service support for the entire theater. He was designated as the Deputy Commanding General for Logistics of ARCENT (Third Army) and the Commander of the provisional SUPCOM.

The provisional SUPCOM headquarters was created initially by assigning Active Component officers from their existing jobs. These officers were logisticians and presumably were known personally to General Pagonis and selected by him for this key assignment. Subsequently, the provisional SUPCOM was expanded by assigning to it additional personnel, both Active and Reserve. The 21st TAACOM Augmentation was called to active duty for this purpose. Some of the newly assigned ARCENT logisticians had worked with the existing 21st TAACOM in Europe and favored calling up the 21st TAACOM Augmentation from the USAR because they were familiar with that unit and its people, while they had not worked with the 377th TAACOM. Members of the 321st Material Management Center were also used to build the provisional SUPCOM. By this process of putting together individuals and smaller elements, General Pagonis pieced together a working headquarters.

The provisional SUPCOM had the following major subordinate units: three Area Support Groups; a petroleum group; a transportation group, and a rear area operations command. Other directly subordinate units included a movements control center, a materiel management center (the same one that was under the 377th TAACOM in peacetime), a data processing unit (which

had been providing daily ADP support for the 377th TAACOM in peacetime), and a chemical detachment.¹¹ Except for the provisional headquarters, the actual theater logistical organization was quite similar to the CAPSTONE trace of the 377th TAACOM. This is not surprising for the Army must adhere to its logistical doctrine in order to assure that the various units in the system will work well together as they have been trained to do.

It was intended from the outset that the provisional SUPCOM would transition into a TAACOM as the theater matured and the number of combat service support units grew.¹² On 13 December 1990 the provisional SUPCOM was reorganized into a permanent headquarters, the 22nd TAACOM, with then-Major General Pagonis as its commander. In February 1991, General Pagonis was promoted to Lieutenant General.

The Mystery

The mystery in this case is why CENTCOM and Third U.S. Army ignored their own plans and provisions for command and control of combat service support in the Persian Gulf and chose instead to form a new provisional headquarters to do the job. The staff actions involved in the decision not to call up the 377th TAACOM demonstrate clearly that this was not a simple case of oversight or error. The intended role of the 377th and its qualifications for the Persian Gulf mission were known to the leadership of the Third US Army. High officials at CENTCOM, FORSCOM, and DA knew about the 377th and its mission. Despite this, ARCENT decided it did not want the 377th TAACOM. As related earlier, the final decision not to utilize the 377th TAACOM was made by the Vice Chief of Staff, Army and--by omission--the Secretary of the Army. Several possible reasons for this decision have been suggested as follows:

1. The 377th TAACOM, or its commander was judged incapable of doing the job.
2. The Army did not want to use high level Reserve headquarters commanded by General Officers.
3. The Army simply did not need the 377th TAACOM.
4. The timing was bad--the Theater had already developed its logistical command arrangements before a Reserve call up was authorized.

The Capability of the 377th

It is difficult to support a conclusion that the 377th TAACOM was not called because it was considered incapable of doing the job or because of a lack of confidence in its commander. The unit was in deployable condition and had acknowledged expertise in the Persian Gulf theater of operations. As soon as the unit was placed on alert for call up, FORSCOM Headquarters requested the assistance of the 377th in reviewing base development designs and plans and estimating base development costs. FORSCOM understood that no other unit had the necessary knowledge or experience to do this. The DCSLOG of the Army testified personally to the acknowledged capability of the 377th TAACOM and urged ARCENT to use the unit. While the position of Third Army on this specific point is unknown, it is difficult to believe that they could have doubted the capability of this unit to perform the mission. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the decision not to call up the 377th TAACOM had little to do with the unit itself.

It is equally difficult to attribute the decision on the 377th to the competence or personality of Major General Jones. There are intimations that the soft-spoken approach of General Jones, gained from a lifetime as an educator, was not considered aggressive enough. But if the personality of General Jones was the problem, it would have been easy enough for the Army to call up the unit, then replace General Jones with another commander of their own choosing--perhaps General Pagonis. It should be pointed out that in terms of date of rank, Major General Jones would have been senior to Major General Pagonis and according to strict protocol would have replaced him as senior logistical operator in the theater if General Jones had been called to active duty. Again, however, this kind of situation could have been handled on the ground without removing General Pagonis from his superior position as Deputy Commanding General for Logistics. The fact that the 377th TAACOM was commanded by General Jones had little to do with the outcome. It appears to be more a case of already having MG Pagonis as the theater logistics operator and not wanting to replace him.

Reserve General Officer Headquarters

It is alleged by some that the Army leadership simply did not want to have a Reserve General Officer serving on active duty and avoided calling up Reserve headquarters commanded by generals. This allegation is serious because it reflects profound distrust of Reserve leaders by the Army leadership. The idea that the Active Army discriminated against Reserve generals strikes at the heart of the Total Army Concept. If true, this would invalidate the whole concept of having a Reserve Component (RC) structure which includes high level headquarters and largely operates independently during peacetime. The very existence of high level Reserve headquarters would be challenged in favor of a Reserve structure in which the Reserves provided only smaller units, and high level headquarters would be either active or formed only in time of need.

Initially there were reports that the Army did not call up Guard and Reserve General Officers because of Congressional limitations on the number allowed on active duty. This was suggested in press reports along with suggestions that "Cynics say the Army has avoided calling RC generals because they don't want them commanding active duty troops."¹³ Since Congress was simultaneously pressing the Army to call up major Reserve units, this rationale was soon discarded. However, additional suspicion about the Army's motives was caused by extensive use of "derivative UICs" to call elements of major Reserve headquarters without calling up the command sections which include the Commanding Generals.¹⁴ This happened to several major Reserve headquarters. Elements of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command were called up selectively without the commander, Brigadier General Howard Mooney. Similarly, elements of the 5501st Hospital Command were called up without the commander, Brigadier General David L. Stabenow. Although Generals Mooney and Stabenow were subsequently called to active duty and deployed to the Persian Gulf to command their units, the use of derivative UICs to breach the integrity of Reserve units has not been well received by Reserve leaders.¹⁵

The 377th TAACOM was not the only senior Reserve headquarters that was not called up.

The 143rd Transportation Command, a theater level headquarters designed to operate a theater transportation system, also was not called. The 143rd had also been working since the early 1980s with the Third U.S. Army in planning for operations in the CENTCOM area. Despite the fact that the 143rd had actually created in August 1991 the transportation plan for Operation DESERT STORM and that 42% of its CAPSTONE trace units were deployed, including all medium and heavy truck companies, the 143rd was not used. Like the 377th, it was placed on alert but never called. Instead, the 7th Transportation Group Headquarters, commanded by a Colonel, was used as the transportation operator for the theater.

The 335th Signal Command also was not used. This theater level headquarters, located in Atlanta, Georgia, worked closely for years with the nearby Third U.S. Army headquarters in planning and preparing for operations in the Middle East. After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, unit personnel augmented the communications staff at Third U.S. Army for over a month. The 335th was certified mission ready, but the 6th Signal Command (Provisional) was formed in the theater by pulling together active duty signal personnel from other units to do the job for which the 335th had trained.¹⁶ On the other hand, there are also several instances of high level Reserve headquarters that were used.

The 416th Engineer Command from Chicago, commanded by Major General Terrence D. Mulcahy with Brigadier General Max Schardein as Deputy Commander, was called with almost all of its CAPSTONE trace and deployed to the Persian Gulf. However, it should be noted that several subordinate elements of the 416th Engineer Command headquarters were called up initially using derivative UICs and that the rest of the headquarters, including the generals, was called up later.¹⁷

The CONUS augmentation for the 21st TAACOM, commanded by Brigadier General Thomas P. Jones, was called and deployed--in effect as a substitute for the 377th TAACOM. As related earlier, the 21st TAACOM (CONUS Augmentation) was used to flesh out the provisional SUPCOM headed by General Pagonis.

The 800th Military Police Command, commanded by Brigadier General Joseph L. Conlon, was activated and deployed to the Persian Gulf as a unit.

By February 1991, 12 Guard or Reserve general officers had been called to active duty for Operation DESERT STORM, and seven of these were serving in the Persian Gulf. Those stationed in the Persian Gulf included Major General Mulcahy and Brigadier General Shardein of the 416th Engineer Command, Brigadier General Richard E. Storat of the 411th Engineer Command, Brigadier General Jones of the 21st TAACOM CONUS Augmentation; Brigadier General Mooney of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command; Brigadier General Conlon of the 800th Military Police Command, and Brigadier General Michael D. Strong of the 332nd Medical Brigade. The total includes three brigadier generals commanding the three Army National Guard round-out brigades: 48th, 155th, and 256th respectively. In addition Major General Max Baratz, an IMA, was serving as Deputy Commanding General of US Forces Command, and Brigadier General Stabenow was commander of the 5501st Hospital Command in CONUS.¹⁸

After a few weeks, the original reluctance of the active Army to use Guard and Reserve General Officers, if it did exist, had given way to the necessities of the build up. While some Reserve General Officer commanders were not called, others were, and it is difficult to attribute the decision on the 377th TAACOM solely to this factor. If having a General Officer as commander were the problem, it would have been possible for the Army to call up parts of the headquarters other than the command section as was done with other Reserve headquarters. In the case of the 377th the theater chose to forego the services of any part of the headquarters in favor of its own provisional solution.

The Need for the 377th TAACOM

It has been suggested that the 377th TAACOM was simply not needed in the Persian Gulf. The argument is that arrangements made by General Pagonis before the call up was decided were sufficient to do the job and the 377th would have been superfluous.

This rationale is difficult to accept. The virtues of having a trained and experienced headquarters familiar with the theater of operations would have made it advantageous to have the 377th even if some redundancy resulted. This was certainly the view of the DCSLOG of the Army who repeatedly urged FORSCOM and ARCENT to make use of the 377th. While technically, perhaps, the Army did not need the 377th TAACOM, it certainly could have used the unit.

If the Army did not need the 377th, it did apparently need a similar Reserve unit, the 21st TAACOM Augmentation, which brought with it 160 personnel, about half the strength of the 377th TAACOM.

The Timing of the Call Up

The President had committed US Forces into the Persian Gulf, and the Army had established its theater command arrangements over two weeks before the Selected Reserve call up was authorized. The military operation was announced on 4 August 1990, and elements of the 82nd Airborne Division arrived in the Persian Gulf on 8 August 1990. The decision to call up Reservists was announced by Marlin Fitzwater on 22 August 1990. This meant that the decision to call up Reserve units was made 14 days after combat troops were committed. The Army leaders in the Persian Gulf had no assurance that any units would be available to them.

By 17 August 1990, moreover, the Army was well along on setting up the theater command arrangements, including the logistical command and management structure. Major General Pagonis had remained in Saudi Arabia after his arrival there early in August 1990. From the day he arrived at Riyadh, he was *de facto* in charge of making the combat service support arrangements for the theater. The provisional SUPCOM started about 5 August, and General Pagonis was formally designated the ARCENT Deputy Commanding General for Logistics at about that same time.¹⁹ Shortly thereafter, ARCENT was given the mission of managing supply and distribution for the entire theater, and Pagonis became the logistical operator for CENTCOM as well.²⁰ By 14 August 1990, General Pagonis had established two provisional Area Support Commands for Riyadh and Dhahran respectively and was well on the way to expanding the provisional SUPCOM to manage the theater buildup.

It is quite likely that General Schwarzkopf, General Yeosock (Commander of Third Army), and General Pagonis were so driven by the urgency of their situation that they did not even consider using the Reserve combat service support headquarters. They made their basic command arrangements before they knew that Reserve units would be available. While the actual decision to call up was made some time before the announcement, there was still an almost two week delay during which the Army leaders in the Persian Gulf had no assurance that Reserve units were going to be available to them. In the meantime, General Pagonis had already established his own headquarters and some of his subordinate commands on a provisional basis. When the 377th TAACOM finally became available, it was too late, for the necessary arrangements had already been made and it made no sense to cause any further turmoil by changing them.

Another factor in the decision to use the provisional headquarters was uncertainty about the length of time that the USAR units would be available. The initial call up of the Guard and Reserve was for only 90 days under the 200,000 Selected Reserve Callup Authority (Title 10, Section 673b). This 90 day period could be--and was--extended by the President for another 90

days. Finally, the callup authorization was extended for up to two years by a Presidential Declaration of National Emergency. But at the time the command arrangements were being made in the Persian Gulf, it was logical to believe that the USAR units, including the 377th TAACOM, would be available at most for 180 days. The theater commander and his Army component commander may well have wanted a long-term solution to the problem of logistics management rather than a Reserve headquarters for a limited period of time.

The Basis for the Decision

The circumstances suggest that the decision not to use the 377th TAACOM was not really a case of anti-Reserve bias by the Active Component leadership. It was more a result of personalities and pressures for immediate action that caused the leadership in the Persian Gulf to go for a quick solution that unfortunately had the effect of ruling out a better, but slower solution. It is unlikely that the personality of General Jones or the fact that he was USAR instead of USA had much to do with the decision.

Another important factor is the impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act on decision-making in DOD. One of the effects of this act is to provide greater weight to the theater commanders--the CINCS--in the planning and (particularly) the conduct of military operations. In the case of the 377th, the Army Staff favored calling the unit, but the theater staff did not. Because of the deference accorded to the desires of the "man on the ground" in establishing requirements, the position of CINCCENT prevailed. It is hard to fault the logic of giving the responsible commander what he wants, particularly in the aftermath of a tremendous victory. It does point up, however, the advisability of thinking about these kinds of things ahead of time rather than improvising on the spot--no matter how brilliantly.

The decision does illustrate the need for more realistic Army planning. The Army did not use its own plan for operations in the Persian Gulf. Either the plan was so defective that it could not be used, or it was simply tossed out at the outset in the excitement of the moment. Planners are fond of saying "the planning process is more important than the plan." However, recognizing that any plan is a starting point to be modified in light of circumstances does not condone poor planning. After eight years of working with its designated combat service support headquarters, the 377th TAACOM, Third U.S. Army suddenly opted for an untested, provisional solution. This is not good planning.

No matter what reasons are cited nor how valid they are, the fact is that despite considerable support for using the 377th TAACOM, the Army decided to rely on a provisional headquarters to command and control combat service support in the Persian Gulf. This fact will have continuing consequences which transcend the reasons why it occurred.

The Consequences

There is one specific and two general consequences of the decision not to call the 377th TAACOM for Operation DESERT STORM. The specific consequence is the impact on the 377th TAACOM itself. The two general consequences are the effect on logistical support for Army operations in the Persian Gulf and the implications of the case for the future of the Army Reserve and the Total Army Concept.

Impact on the 377th

While some members of the Army--Active Component as well as Reserve Components--sought to be excused from duty in the Persian Gulf, the members of the 377th TAACOM were eager to deploy and do the job for which they had trained. The failure of the Army to call up the unit was a big disappointment to the unit members. From the commanding general on down, there is chagrin that after all of their years of hard work, they were not used. The hours spent in learning about the potential theater of operations, in working with Third U.S. Army Headquarters on plans, developing field SOPs, and exercising the plans and procedures are now perceived by the Reservists to have been a waste of time and effort. Many personal and family sacrifices were made by individuals to have the organization trained and ready for the mission, and the failure to use the 377th is viewed by them as an insult to their personal and professional pride. In the absence of a logical explanation why they were not used, or indeed of any explanation whatever, the unit members believe that the Army's action can be explained only by Active Component bias against Reservists.

The 377th TAACOM is trying to pick up the pieces after their disappointment. They offered to help out by taking their annual training individually in two week shifts at ARCENT Rear at Fort McPherson, Georgia. In this way they said they could at least make their theater expertise available in some way. The unit also offered to assume responsibility for assisting logistical units not called up in a modified CAPSTONE trace. Letters offering to do these jobs were forwarded to the Commanding General of Fifth Army on 22 September 1990. The 377th TAACOM received a response from Fifth Army stating that these letters were forwarded to FORSCOM recommending approval. There has been no response from FORSCOM.

Members of the 377th TAACOM believe that it will be hard in the future to motivate Reservists to train as hard as they did before. Many officers and enlisted personnel took extra training and devoted additional hours without pay to learn their jobs. The question is, will Reservists in the 377th TAACOM (and other Reserve units which were not used) be willing in the future to donate extra time and effort to maintain a high state of readiness for an Army which did not use them?

Impact on Logistical Support in the Gulf

The absence of the 377th TAACOM had no long-term adverse impact on the situation in the Persian Gulf. The job got done. There was no war from August 1990 until January 1991, and this allowed time for the provisional headquarters solution to work. Even if the job was done poorly and with excessive costs, it still got done. The overwhelming military victory by US and Coalition Forces is proof of that.

It is possible, however, that the job would have been done better if the 377th TAACOM had been utilized as the theater logistical headquarters under the Deputy Commanding General for Logistics of ARCENT. It is reasonable to believe that a fully manned, well trained, and experienced logistical headquarters which reported for duty in the Persian Gulf about 1 September 1990 could have done as well as a provisional headquarters--and maybe even better. Familiarity with the theater and the plans should have made the job easier. It would have been advantageous to have had a full array of functional staff specialists available from the outset. It would certainly have added a degree of stability to the deploying combat service support Reserve units to be able to deal with a headquarters with which they were familiar and in some cases, already had established operating procedures. It would have also obviated the need for taking personnel from other deployed units to staff the provisional SUPCOM. For example, 85 members of the 321st Materiel Management Center were taken from that unit after arrival in theater and used to augment the provisional SUPCOM staff, degrading the capability of the 321st MMC. If the 377th TAACOM had been deployed, that would not have been necessary.

It will be difficult, however, to establish if the Army blundered by not having the 377th TAACOM doing its intended mission. It is unlikely that an objective appraisal can be made of this point at this time. Reservists are likely to contend that the 377th TAACOM could have improved logistics in the theater.²¹ CENTCOM and ARCENT are likely to contend that logistics management in the theater was good and that the problems were due to the environment, the timetable, and circumstances beyond their control. The Department of the Army will likely defer making a definitive finding on this controversial issue until some reasonable degree of objectivity can be attained. The best that can be said with assurance at this point is that the presence of the 377th TAACOM in Saudi Arabia during September 1990 could not have hurt and likely would have helped.

Impact on the Future Total Army

Perhaps the most serious consequence of the decision by the Army not to call up the 377th TAACOM is in the effect on the Total Army Concept in the future. How will the Active, Guard, and Reserve fit together in the days ahead as the Army seeks to restructure and down-size to accommodate to the post-Cold War and post-Saddam Hussein worlds? Is the Total Army Concept mortally wounded or just damaged slightly?

Many Reservists who were not used for Operation DESERT STORM, view the 377th TAACOM case as clear evidence of anti-Reserve bias by the Active Army. Major General Henry Mohr, a former Chief of the Army Reserve, has stated this position by citing the case of the 377th TAACOM as evidence of "the Army's unjustified reluctance to depend on its Reserve forces..."²² General Mohr's outrage is echoed by many senior Reserve officers. This attitude on the part of the Reserve leadership may be an important factor in the forthcoming battles over budget allocations and force mix.

On the other hand, those Reserve generals, headquarters, and units that were called and employed in the Persian Gulf will have a different view of the matter. These Reservists are going to remember Operation DESERT STORM in light of their own experience. Despite some instances of poor treatment at the hands of the active Army, they will remember being embraced as a full member of the Total Army team in a victorious war. They will tend to regard the cases of the 377th TAACOM and other unused Reserve headquarters as exceptions, or they may never even think about them at all. While the situation of the 377th TAACOM is highly important to the members of that unit and to others closely involved in the decision process, it is unlikely to have much overall impact on the attitudes of many or even most officers and troops of the US Army Reserve.

There is some evidence of lack of faith by the Active Army leadership in the Total Army Concept. Although Army plans called for instant use of certain Reserve headquarters and major combat units, the Army leadership had to be convinced by the Joint Staff even to call up units of the Army National Guard and Army Reserve and did so reluctantly only after it became apparent that the Active Army could not do the job alone. Even then the Active Army gave the appearance of doubting the readiness of some Reserve units to do the jobs for which the Active Army had been training them. They made it clear, for example, that they doubted the capability of National Guard combat units. Some perceive that when the time came to use its Reserve Components, the active Army simply did not practice what it had been preaching. At least that is the perception that Congress and the Reserve Community have. This means that there will be extensive discussion of the case of the 377th TAACOM and similar cases after the smoke of battle has cleared.

The basic problem, however, is neither Active Army attitudes nor the lack of Reserve readiness. Many Army leaders wanted to follow the Total Army Concept, CAPSTONE, and existing operation plans. Most of the Reserve units were ready, willing, and able. The basic problem in the case of the 377th TAACOM and for Operation DESERT STORM as a whole is that the basic planning assumption relating to the availability of Reserve units did not come true at the outset of Operation DESERT STORM. It was assumed that Reserve units would be called automatically at the outset and be available for a period of at least two years. In fact, there was a two week delay between the commitment of military forces and the call up of the Reserve units, and the initial call up was for 90 days only.²³

When the planning assumption failed, there was uncertainty about the availability of Reserve units and the length of time they could be used even if made available. It was this uncertainty about the availability of the 377th--not its capability--which led the theater commander and his people to establish their own provisional headquarters. The delay itself was not why the 377th TAACOM was not used; doctrinally, the unit would have been deployed approximately 35 days after the start of deployments in any case. It was uncertainty about how long the Reserve units would stay which led the theater commander and his staff to refuse even to accept the 377th TAACOM as an additional asset for their use even after it was offered to them.

In effect, the plans were based on early availability of Reserve units for an indefinite period of time, and the uncertainties initially surrounding the Reserve call up invalidated the plans. Because of that it was necessary to improvise. In some instances it was possible to get back on the original planning track once the Reserve call up occurred; in other instances, such as the 377th TAACOM, it was not.

This is an instance in which plans formulated for global conflict involving major conventional war with the Soviet Union in Europe proved to be inappropriate for a regional war in the Persian Gulf. In all likelihood, numerous other instances of inappropriate plans will emerge from the evaluation of Operation DESERT STORM. The lesson of this particular case suggests that the authorities for use of Reserve Component units and individuals need revision for the realities of the 1990s.

A Final Word

This paper has sought a rational explanation for what, after all, may not be a rational matter. The explanation offered is unlikely to be accepted by partisans of one side or the other. Reservists reviewing drafts of this paper have asserted that this case study "does not explain the closed door policy, the whispers behind the back, and the anti-Reserve attitude encountered while working the issue at ARCENT and FORSCOM." They point out that whatever the reason, the failure to use the 377th TAACOM is a fact, and that the "Army leadership allowed personal preferences to be the overriding factor in deciding on a way to accomplish the mission and ignored doctrine, planning, training, and the advice of the logisticians."

Active Army readers pointed out that any plan is just a starting point, and that changes have to be made in light of realities at the time of execution. They also point out correctly that whatever the Army did, the results were extraordinarily good.

As is usual in complicated matters, both parties are right. The pressing need is to learn how to modify the policies and the process so that the solution will be better next time. Is the solution to abandon high level headquarters in the Army Reserve and rely on forming provisional

Active headquarters for future wars? Is the solution to revise the Reserve call up authorities to make certain that Reserve units, headquarters, and personnel will be available when needed? Should CAPSTONE be modified or even discarded? How can three components--Active, Guard, Reserve--be blended into a real Total Army for peace and for war? These are important questions which are going to have to be addressed in the aftermath of Operation DESERT STORM. The case of the 377th TAACOM--The Unit That Was Not Called--could be instructive as these matters are deliberated in the days ahead.

End Notes

1. A Conan Doyle, "Silver Blaze," The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes.
2. The name Operation DESERT STORM is used throughout the paper to mean both DESERT SHIELD (the build-up phase) and DESERT STORM (the combat phase). This avoids the use of the awkward term Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM.
3. A TAACOM is designed to manage not only the logistical operations (supply, maintenance, transportation, and services) but also the broader combat service support operations, which include personnel services, medical support, civil affairs, construction, and finance.
4. 377th TAACOM Orientation Booklet, p 4.
5. Ibid.
6. Ltr, HQs 377th TAACOM to Commander, Fifth US Army, 28 September 1990.
7. In addition to those called up involuntarily, the Army Reserve had members serving voluntarily on active duty during this period. The number of volunteers averaged about 1,000 over the first three months of the exercise with a peak strength of 1,600 in the first half of October 1990. Source: David Garner, Operation Desert Shield & Desert Storm Briefing, Logistics Management Institute, 23 January 1991.
8. Source: Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve, 10 January 1991.
9. See The Citizen Patriot, Vol 2, No 23, December 3, 1990, p 4, for a more complete report of the position taken by the DSCLOG.
10. Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, DA, Operation Desert Shield Deployment Lessons, December 1990.
11. op cit, p 3.
12. op cit, p 4.
13. The Citizen Patriot, Vol 2, No 22, November 19, 1990, p 1.
14. A UIC is the Unit Identification Code which designates each unit in the Army and the other Services uniquely. The code is structured with six characters. The first four characters designate the unit; the last two characters designate sub-elements of the unit. A UIC with "AA" in the last two digits stands for the entire unit. By calling up UICs with different codes in the last two places, the Army could reach into Reserve units and obtain

only what it needed in the form of staff sections or operating elements.

15. The Citizen Patriot, Vol 3, No 1, January 7, 1991, p 1 and Vol 3, No 3, February 4, 1991, p 3.

16. The Citizen Patriot, Vol 3, No 1, January 7, 1991, p 4.

17. The Citizen Patriot, Vol 3, No 1, January 7, 1991, p 4.

18.¹⁸ Source for the list of general officers is The Citizen Patriot, Vol 3, No 3, February 4, 1991, p 3.

19. It has been difficult to establish definite dates for these events which took place early in August 1990. The date for the establishment of the provisional SUPCOM is based on the fact that Daily SITREP #20 for that headquarters is dated 25 August. It is assumed that General Pagonis was designated DCG of ARCENT for Logistics at about that same time. The lack of definite dates does not obviate the essential fact that Pagonis was in charge of logistics for the theater very early in August 1990.

20. CENTCOM Message 132000Z August, Subject: ADMIN/LOG, Section 5, Para 2b(11) states that ARCENT will be in charge of supply and distribution for Saudi Arabia. This and succeeding messages have the effect of making General Pagonis the logistical operator for the entire theater.

21. There are indications that some Reservists returning from duty in the Persian Gulf are critical of the logistical management there. These views should be considered when the logistical operations are evaluated for lessons learned.

22. Washington Times, 7 January 1991.

23. The authority to call up to 200,000 Selected Reservists had been envisioned by mobilization planners as a way to get a head start on a full mobilization rather than as a way to use Reserve units in a smaller war. The limitation of 90 days, extendable to 180 days, was not considered a problem by planners because they also assumed that the President would declare a national emergency to extend the call up authority to one million Ready Reservists for a period of two years before the initial 90 day period expired.

The Principal Author

Mr. John Brinkerhoff is a graduate of the United States Military Academy, California Institute of Technology, Columbia University, and George Washington University. He is a retired Army engineer corps colonel. He has served two tours on the Army staff in force development and manpower related positions. Subsequent to his military service, he was Special Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, after which he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. Additionally, he served as an Associate Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), where he was responsible for mobilization policy. Mr. Brinkerhoff is serving as a consultant to the ANDRULIS Research Corporation.

The Editors and Contributing Authors

Mr. Ted Silva is a graduate of Northeastern University, the University of Hawaii, the Executive Development Program of Cornell University, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He is a retired Army signal corps colonel. His Reserve Component experience includes service as Chief, Reserve Forces and Mobilization Division, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. For the past three years, Mr. Silva has served as a program manager and research analyst for the ANDRULIS Research Corporation, evaluating Federal emergency preparedness and the Army Reserve participation in Operation DESERT STORM.

Mr. John Seitz is a graduate of the University of Missouri, Shippensburg University, and the Army War College. He is a retired Army field artillery colonel. His Reserve Component experience includes service as Chief, Readiness Group Fort Riley and Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations and Plans, Fourth Army. For the past three years, Mr. Seitz has worked as a research analyst and program manager for the ANDRULIS Research Corporation, evaluating Federal emergency preparedness and the Army Reserve participation in Operation DESERT STORM.